

**BDAC Ecosystem Roundtable Meeting  
13 December 1996**

**Attendee List**

Roundtable Members

Nat Bingham  
Gary Bobker  
John Beuttler  
Rich Golb  
Bill Gaines  
Greg Gartrell

Cynthia Koehler  
Randy Kanouse  
Hari Modi  
John S. Mills  
Jackie McCort  
Jason Peltier

Allen Short  
Tim Quinn  
Walt Wadlow  
David Yargas  
Tom Zuckerman

Other Participants

Serge Birk  
Clene Chard  
John Coburn  
Peter Candy  
Cindy Darling  
Richard Frank  
Tom Hickman  
Steve Hirsch  
Bob Herkert  
Kate Hansel

Jeff Jaraczski  
Jan Jennings  
Margaret Johnston  
Eugenia Laychak  
Andrea Lawrence  
Marc Luesebrink  
Roger Masuda  
Dan Nelson  
Jeff Phipps  
Pete Rhoads

Rick Sitts  
Greg Sutter  
Nancy Schaefer  
Fred Schantz  
Kelly Tennis  
Carol Thornton  
Larry Ward  
Scott Wilcox  
Doug Wallace  
Patrick Wright

**Draft Meeting Summary**

Decisions Made

- The mission statement was accepted as revised.
- The Ecosystem Roundtable asked that subgroup be formed to work on a needs assessment.
- Guest speakers familiar with private venture capital will be invited to speak at lunch after the next meeting.
- The priorities for guiding the allocation of funds will be aquatic species that are listed, of special concern, or desirable aquatic species that have are "in the greatest need", and habitat types that have experienced the greatest declines, which are important to the priority species, or where demonstration projects can increase understanding of large scale ecosystem processes. The priorities will also be reviewed to ensure that projects will be broadly distributed over the geographical area.

- Staff will develop a list of priority species and habitat types and associated rationale, as well as a rationale for the geographical allocation of resources.
- Future meeting dates are Tuesday, January 21st, 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m.; Thursday, February 20th, 1:00-4:00p.m.; Friday, March 14th, 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m.; and the 2nd Friday of the month in April (11th), May (9th), and June (13th) from 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m.

#### **Items for Future Meetings**

- Review list of priority species, habitat types, geographical areas, and associated rationales.
- Review input from needs assessment subgroup.
- Review timelines of other funding programs.
- Receive input on how private entrepreneurs make decisions in the face of uncertainty and risk.

#### **Draft Meeting Notes**

The meeting began at 9:15 a.m. with introductions by all attendees. Agenda changes were suggested by Cindy Darling regarding the order of the items for the morning session. Cindy then reviewed the revised Ecosystem Roundtable mission, goals, and objectives based on input from the last Roundtable meeting and written comments that were received from John Mills. Changes and/or comments from members of the Roundtable included:

1. Leaving the mission statement open to future revision,
2. Concern about who will review and rank the various restoration action proposals (page 3 of the handout entitled "Revised Ecosystem Roundtable Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives"),
3. A suggestion that there be a maintenance of the distinction between long-term and short-term project implementation, and
4. Concerns regarding a need for earlier Roundtable input into the draft of the annual workplan.

The Roundtable concluded that the mission statement can be accepted as revised.

Cindy Darling continued with a review of the draft outline of the 5-year Ecosystem Restoration Workplan and associated timeline. The timeline was presented as a handout and displayed as an overhead transparency. Questions were raised regarding the number of funding phases that are anticipated (e.g. quarterly, semi-annual, annual, etc.), how much funding there would be in the first cycle, and the need for project proposal development time. It was noted that there would be associated problems with any delays in either the proposal preparation time, or the time involved in preparing environmental documents, etc. prior to actually spending any allocated funds. In response to various questions, Cindy indicated that the technical teams will have substantial involvement in development of the workplan, along with CalFed staff, during the January to March timeframe. There were additional comments that proposals to CalFed needed to have a considerable amount of detail to be suitable for funding (particularly related to the level of detail that had been in Category III proposals during the most recent round of funding). There was

another comment that the permitting process needs to be streamlined in order to allow funded projects to be implemented in the near-term.

Related to the level of funding for this coming year, Cindy indicated that a reasonable goal of \$20-\$30 million of funds allocated by late June of 1997 may be appropriate. There will likely be some "ramping" up of spending as time goes on, as more projects reach the construction stage and as Federal funds become available in FY 98 and beyond. It was noted that over the short-term the Roundtable may need to build on existing plans and projects, rather than filling "gaps," because the existing plans and projects could be implemented more rapidly.

The value of conducting a needs assessment for the Ecosystem Roundtable was discussed. A Roundtable sub-group consisting of Tim Quinn, Nat Bingham, Allen Short, Jason Peltier, David Yardas, Rich Golb, and Cynthia Koehler was appointed to work on the needs assessment. The Roundtable members wanted this group appointed because of the magnitude of the task in ahead and concerns that there be adequate resources available. The needs assessment would include some estimate of the effort required and the options available to complete the following tasks:

- Technical team planning process to develop 5 year workplan
- Peer review of the 5 year workplan
- Project selection process including selection criteria and proposal review and ranking
- Grant or contract writing and administration
- Tracking of project implementation including standard monitoring criteria
- Annual reporting of accomplishments, and lessons learned for adaptive management
- Project development to ensure that concepts are translated into projects capable of being funded in future years
- Permit coordination

The role of the Roundtable membership in the technical process for developing the workplan was discussed, and it was suggested that the Roundtable move toward using the example of other similar processes that exclude policy, legal, and lobbying staff from the technical teams. It was also noted that the technical teams need to be balanced in terms of stakeholder groups. There was additional discussion of where the division occurs between the technical and policy level input into the process.

Following a break, Cindy Darling reviewed the "Draft Outline of Five Year Ecosystem Restoration Workplan," including the example tables showing rationale, schedule, and cost. In reviewing the workplan, a question was raised regarding the sensitivity of identifying specific projects that various stakeholders and landowners may be adverse to at this point in the process. The workplan may need to be more general with regard to specific project listings if there is not already an agreement with the landowners to participate in the project. There was additional discussion of the level of specificity to be included in the actions that are listed in the workplan.

Cindy then discussed the "BDAC Ecosystem Roundtable Funding Tools" document that was part of the meeting packet, with particular reference to the various levels of coordination that must go on between different Bay-Delta related programs. The concept of the "virtual pool" of was

discussed. The basis for this concept is that decision making structures for existing funding sources would not be changed but that CALFED would work towards coordination and potentially integration between the funding sources. The Ecosystem Roundtable would provide advise directly to CALFED on the Category III funds and any federal funding received under the authorization for \$430 million. They would also provide advise on how to integrate with the other funding sources. Over time, as the Roundtable and CALFED developed a track record, there would be the possibility of integrating the various restoration funding sources together but this would not be done unless the other programs agreed.

It was suggested that the Roundtable get input from a venture capitalist regarding how they handle risk and uncertainty in funding projects. The input of a businessperson from the private sector was considered a potentially valuable addition to the expertise of various planners, scientists, and engineers who are currently working on the Ecosystem Roundtable program. Tom Zuckerman agreed to get a guest speaker for the next meeting of the Roundtable who can address venture capital issues (during a lunch session following the meeting).

Following the lunch break, Cindy Darling distributed a three-page handout entitled "CALFED/BAY-DELTA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROGRAM DEFINITIONS," and a two-page handout entitled "Table 2. ERPP Ecosystem Elements." These handouts were briefly reviewed, along with the meeting packet paper entitled "Development of a Implementation Strategy." It was noted that there are a number of ways to develop priorities for project implementation. These priorities could involve different geographic areas, habitat types, limiting factors, ecosystem processes, or different species. The subsequent Roundtable discussion regarding priority setting included suggestions that an expanded list of species of special concern be developed. They also wanted habitat types identified which provide substantial ecosystem benefits, which had experienced the greatest declines, and where demonstration projects were needed to begin the adaptive management process. The species and habitat priorities would then be examined to see what geographical areas they would cover. There was discussion that the projects needed to be broadly distributed geographically but not spread so thin so that only minimal improvements were made in any one watershed. The possibility of ranking various species of special concern by a percent decline as a way of developing priorities was suggested. The discussion and flip chart items regarding priority setting are summarized in Attachment 1.

The Roundtable agreed on the selection of three priorities for implementing projects:

1. Geographical prioritization by watershed,
2. Species groups of concern, and
3. Key habitat types which had experienced declines and where demonstration projects were needed based on large scale ecosystem processes.

It was recommended that staff be tasked to develop a list of priority species and an associated rationale, as well as being a rationale for the geographical allocation of resources. It was suggested that the prioritization needed to elevate species that provide multiple benefits, and there was some indication that aquatic species should be emphasized (particularly for Category III funding).

The discussion regarding geographical prioritization indicated that this part of the implementation strategy will generally flow from the priorities for species of concern and larger scale ecosystem process related projects. The discussion of species of concern included the comment that recreational and non-recreational, listed and non-listed species should be included.

Regarding the priority for large scale ecosystem process and habitat enhancement projects, it was noted that we should be able to evaluate and document the success of the project. Areas which should receive the highest priority are those that area suffering significant losses, and the habitat enhancement projects should emphasize wetlands due to existing information regarding the importance of this habitat type.

Following the priority setting discussion, Lester Snow reviewed the Federal funding status for the proposed five-year program. He referred to a November 7, 1996 handout entitled "Overview Proposed Five Year Program Activities and Cost Estimate" which was an estimate of the cost of the overall CALFED program including funding from a variety of sources. Lester stated that fiscal year 1998 Federal funding could be a significant proportion of the total \$240 million estimated for FY 1998. There is still some discussion of whether line items for funding of CALFED programs will be in each respective agency's budget, or separate as a CALFED lump sum line item.

Cynthia Koehler and Gary Bobker distributed a discussion draft dated 12 December entitled "BAY-DELTA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FISCAL YEAR 1998 PROGRAM PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION." This document is for Roundtable member information only.

There was no response to the invitation for public comment at the conclusion of the meeting.

Future meetings of Roundtable were scheduled as follows:

Tuesday, January 21st, 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m. followed by a speaker at lunch.

Thursday, February 20th, 1:00-4:00p.m.

Friday, March 14th, 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m.

Subsequent Roundtable meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Friday of each month from 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m.. This will include April 11th, May 9th, and June 13th.